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A Short HISTORY OF THE ANABAPTISTS OF HIGH AND LOW GERMANY.

Tantum religio potuit ſuadere malorum.

LONDON,
Printed by *T. Badger*, for *Samuel Brown*.
M.DC.XLII.

A SHORT

HISTORY

OF THE

ANABAPTISTS

OF HIGH AND LOW

GERMANY.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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To the Readers.

Readers, This Treatiſe is a ſtreame made up of ſeverall ſprings; If you will ſee the fountaines, Read Sleydan *in the fift and tenth books,* Iohannes Hereſbachius, Antonius Sorvinus *and* Lambertus Hortenſius; *who have written treatiſes of that ſubject: the laſt being exact about the troubles of the Lowcountries, as* John Gaſtio *is for thoſe of Suitzerland.* Guy de Bres *hath ſpent a great deale of good labour, in deſcribing and confuting that ſect: And ſo hath* Bullinger, *who hath written their Hiſtory, and confuted their Doctrine. I leave out* Miſſoreius, *who being a Jeſuite, ſeeketh to diſgrace the Proteſtants with the tenets and actions of the* Anabaptiſts. *Many worthy Divines have written againſt their hereſies: The chiefeſt are* Luther, Melanchton, Calvin, Oecolampadius, Bullinger, Lauaterus *and* Vrſinus.

To the Reader.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A Short History of the ANABAPTISTS.

Chap. I.

The disposition of the people that embraced Anabaptisme: The Reformed Religion cleared from any society with it.

AS in a hot Summer day, many times there riseth a great mist with the Sunne-rising, the like comes to passe at the rising of the Sun of Righteousnesse. Since the dayes of the Apostles, that Sunne never shone with more brightnesse and vigour than in *Luther's* beginnings; but it seemeth that this very strenght of the Sun-shine of the truth which dispelled the darke night of Popery, raised the foule mist of *Anabaptisme*; which sinister effect must not be ascribed to the nature of the Truth, but to the indisposition of the severall subjects not capable to receive it; for where the Gospell meeteth with the ornament of a meet and quiet spirit (which yet is the worke of Grace, not Nature) it first enlightneth the understanding, and then sweetly perswadeth the will and warmeth the affections; but meeting with weake and turbulent natures, whose judgment is all passion, it fils

them with a wild zeale, and that precious liquor turns into vinegar being powred into such uncleane vessels.

This was seene in the common people of *Germany*, *Lowcountries* and *Suitzerland*, whose soules were as course as their condition; for no sooner had *Luther* and *Zuinglius* began to preach the true reformed *Gospel*, but the people made to themselves a new *Gospel* of licentiousnes and rebellion, which produced such furious effects that it was like to have strangled the true Gospell in its cradle: And it seemed that God angry at the wilfull blindnesse of the world that loved darknesse better than light, had prepared a worme to strike that Gourd the next day after her sudden happy rising.

But God would not suffer the good to be overcome with evill, but overcame the evill with good; for *Anabaptisme* lasted not in his strenght above ten yeares, and ever since hath been only buzzing in obscure corners, like a waspe that hath lost its sting. Whereas the true Reformed Religion, notwithstanding the many persecutions of the world and all the craft of Satan, seemeth to get life by her wounds, and hath given to the *Romish* beast that deadly blow, of which (I trust in God) she shall bleed till she dye, *haret lateri lethalis arundo*.

But because the *Papists* shall not ascribe (as they use to do) those factions and rebellions to the Reformation, it will be requisite to observe what were the dispositions of the commons of High and Low *Germany*, a little before *Luther* began to oppose the Pope.

Trithemius Abbas Vspergensis, in his Chronicle of the yeare 1503, relateth, that in that yeare arose a great sedition of Peasants about *Bruxelles*, which he calleth *Liga Sotularia*; They were sworne to these

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Articles, To shake off the yoke of all Higher Powers, and get liberty by force of Armes like the *Suitzers*; To pull down all Magistrats, and kill all that should stand against them; To seize on the City of *Bruxels*, and invade the Marquisat of *Baden*; To seize on all the revenues of Monasteries, Churches and Clergymen; To stay no where above 24 houres, but go forward still, till they had brought many Countreys to their society; To pay no more tythes, nor Lords rents, nor tributes: Whosoever was received into that League, was to say five times a day on his knees a *Pater* and an *Ave*, for the good successe of their enterprise; and their word of cognisance was the *Virgin Mary* and Saint *John* the Evangelist. But that League went but a little way, being timely stopt, and the Authors put to death by *Maximilian* their Prince. Compare these Articles with those of the *Anabaptists* 30 yeares after in the same Country, you shall find them the same, and both varnished over with Religion: All the difference was that the *Sotularians* kept in their old heresie, and the *Anabaptists* broached a new one: I hope the *Papists* will not impute that sedition to the Reformation, no more than the inraged rebellions of the *Gantois* against their Soveraignes, for both were rank *Papists*: The true cause then must be ascribed to the mutinous humour of that Nation, which afterwards was made worse by the cruell domination of the *Spaniard*, so that when Reformation came, and shooke off the yoke of *Popery*, the discontented commons tooke occasion (by wresting and corrupting the holy Doctrine) to shake off the yoke of their hard masters, and turned the spirituall liberty of the Gospell, into carnall licentiousnesse.

The like reason must be given for the *Anabaptistical* com-

commotions in High *Germany*, for in *Luther's* time and before the lower sort of people were extreamely oppreſt by the Princes, Noblemen, and Gentlemen of the Empire, which made *Luther* to write about it to all the Princes, *Anno* 1525, to dehort them from their infinite exactions, and exhort them for Gods ſake and for their own peace and ſafety, to uſe their ſubjects & tenants like men, not like beaſts made for the yoke and the ſlaughter; If *Anabaptiſme*, being a doctrin of licentiouſneſſe and libertinage, was readily embraced by a multitude that groned under a miſerable bondage, none needs to wonder.

As for the *Suitzers*, their popular ſtate, together with the contagion of the neighbouring *Germany*, made way for that popular doctrin: 200 yeares before they had killed or ejected all their Nobility, by whom they were heavily oppreſt: And now the lower ſort of people being bred in an antient hatred againſt Superiours, embraced that doctrine greedily, which armed the commons againſt their Magiſtrates.

It was in the yeare 1315.

But it muſt be acknowledged to the praiſe of that State that the Eccleſiaſticall and Politicall body oppoſed *Anabaptiſme* with great vertue and vigor, and ſo juſtified to the world that they were as great enemies to confuſion as their forefathers had beento oppreſſiō.

To cleare the Reformed Religion from that wicked imputation, that it gave countenance to theſe rebellions and new doctrines, the *Anabaptiſts* will ſerve, for they hated *Luther* worſe than the *Pope*, and troubled the Euangeliques more than the Papiſts: And when they would inſinuate themſelves into the reformed States, with a ſmeeming familiari y, they had but rough entertainment among them, *Familiaris accipere haud familiariter.* What conferences paſt between them and

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what paines the Reformed tooke to confute them, the lasting Monuments will shew, which are extant in the writings of *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Melancthon*, *Zuinglius*, *Oecolampadius*, *Lavaterus*, *Bullinger*, *Vrsinus* and *Gastio*.

Chap. II.

The first occasions and seeds of Anabaptisme, *The insurrection of* Muncer, *and* Phifer.

IN the yeare 1521 *Luther* being proscribed by *Charles* the 5, Emperour, was secretly conveyed away out of *Wittemberg*, by *Frederick* Duke of *Saxony*. In his absence *Andreas Carolostadius* one of the Ministers of *Wittemberg*, began to preach some new doctrines of his own, and being a passionate man, stirred the people to pull down Images out of Churches in a tumultuous manner. *Luther* for that chiefe reason being called to *Wittenberg* again by his friends, condemned the proceedings of *Carolostadius*, saying, That although himselfe hated Images and wish them abolished, yet it ought to have been done orderly, removing them first out of the minds of the people, and teaching them that by Faith only we please God, and that Images are of no use in Religion: That the Consciences being thus informed and settled, Images would fall down of themselves: Also that when Images should be removed, he would have it done by the Magistrate, not by a popular sedition, holding it a matter of dangerous consequence to set the people on worke about any publique action, which should be done by the hand of authority.

About the same time a new Sect was springing in *Saxony*, of some fanaticall people, boasting that they talked with God, and God with them, who commanded them to kill all

the wicked and make a new World, wherein the innocent and godly should live and raigne alone; of which opinion *Carolostadius* was either the authour or the abettour: And when he could not get that doctrine received at *Wittemberg*, where *Luther* was too strong for him, he left *Wittemberg* and resorted to these new brethren.

It is hard to say whether *Carolostadius* or one *Nicholas Stock*, was the first founder of *Anabaptisme*. *Melanchton* saith that *Nicolas Stock* was he that began, He would say, that God spake to him by an Angell, and revealed him his will in dreames, promising him the place of the Angell *Gabriel*, and the Empire of the World: He taught that the Saints must raigne in the World, and that he must be their leader, to kill all the Kings and Princes of the World, and repurge the Church: He tooke upon him to have the gift of discerning the Spirits, and know the Elect; he made holinesse to consist in speaking little, and living homely and sordidly.

In that mans schoole was *Thomas Muncer* bred, who amplified much his Masters doctrine. He began to preach at *Alset* a City in the borders of *Thuringia*, belonging to the Elector of *Saxony*, teaching that the burden of the Pope was too heavy, and that of *Luther* too light; that his consorts must have a new Baptisme; That Christians must be of an austere countenance, speake little and weare long beards; This he cals the crosse and the mortification of the flesh: Also that they ought to retire into desarts or private places, there to think of God & aske him signes, whether he think of them, & whether they be in the right Religion: He ascribed much unto dreames, saying that God declareth his will that way, and praysed openly in his Sermons such as had dreamed a dreame that bore some explication.

Anno 1525. In that City of *Alstet* he began first to make a confederacy administring an Oath and taking the names of all them that promised to assist him in his designe, of killing all the ungodly

ly Princes and Magistrates, and erecting new ones in their places. So long as he was content to preach of dreames and the like matters of lesse consequence, *Friderick* Elector of *Saxony* bore with him; but when he began to preach sedition, he banished him out of his dominions: And he having lyen hid some months, came to *Nurenberg*, and being driven thence also, came to *Mulhus*, a towne of *Thuringia*, where many of his old Disciples when he was at *Alstet*, resorted to him again.

Luther hearing of this, writes to the Magistrates and Senat of the Town, that they should not harbour *Muncer*, as they loved their own safety, describing withall the mans doctrin and conditions, and exhorting them to aske *Muncer* who had given him authority to preach, and if he could not shew no ordinary calling, that then they should eject him. The Senate of *Mulhus* needed not many persuasions, for they liked not that new gheſt: But *Muncer* was too quick for them, for he so wrought upon the people in a short time, that they put down the Magistrats and set others in their place of their own faction. Not long after they drave the Fryars away, and seized on their houses, of which the best was given to *Muncer*, who bore himselfe no more as a meere Preacher, but as a Senator; for he judged of all things out of the Bible and Divine revelations, and whatsoever he determined was received as an Oracle; especially when hee preached that all good must be common, and all men free and of equall dignity: An acceptable doctrin in those parts where the Nobility and Gentry used their Tenants and Vassals like slaves, and oppresst them with multitude of impositions & services; No wonder if that new Gospel wonne the meanest sort, who presently leftworking, and what they wanted they tooke by open force from them that had it.

At the same time in *Suevia*, and *Franconia* 400 00 boores and tradesmen rose up in armes, killed and ransacked great

part of the Nobles, tooke, pillaged and burnt many Forts and Castles, overthrowing all in their way like a sudden inundation; for when the banks of authority are once beaten down, nothing can stop the popular fury, till they loose themselves in their own confusion.

Muncer then thought it was time for him to do the like, he layeth up abundãce of amunition, maketh his Magazin in the Convent of *Franciscans*, casteth artillery, raiseth a numerous multitude of men, the meane People leaving their loome and their plough, to turn venturers in this holy war.

His chiefe associate was *Phifer*, one that gave much credence to dreames and night visions, and among other visions, would say, that he had seen in his dreame a great company of Rats in a stable, and had driven them all away; Which he interpreted as a command from God to take armes and dispossesse all the Nobility & Gentry: This *Phifer* was the stouter of the two, for although *Muncer* was vehement in his Sermons to the people, yet he would not try the hazard of a battell, till all the neighbouring Countryes were joyned with him; To which end he sent diverse letters to the diggers of mynes, of which the County of *Mansfield* is full, exhorting them seriously to fall upon their Princes and cut them off, that so his party in *Franconia*, which looked but for his call, might have a free passage into *Thuringia*; But *Phifer* impatient of delayes, rusheth into the Countrey of *Isfeld*, pilladgeth Castles and Churches, destroyeth many of the Nobles, brings some of them bound, and returneth with a great booty; Which successe raised the minds of the boores, and caused another defection in the County of *Mansfeld*. So *Muncer* hoping that the rebellion was universall, taketh his journey from *Mulhus*, and is presently supplyed with a company of *Frankhusians*.

But before this snow ball could grow by rolling, the Count *Mansfeld* stopt its course, for having raised in haste

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some Companies of Horse, he fals upon *Muncer*, and killeth two hundred of his men, at which the rude unexperienced boores were so terrified that they all fled away to *Frankhus*, there to expect a greater supply, though they were men enough, but (as it seemes) Souldiers few or none. This only skirmish broke the edge of their fury, and gave time to *Iohn* Elector of *Saxony* (newly come to that dignity, by the death of his brother *Frider.ck)* and his unkle *George* of *Saxony*, *Philip* Lantgrave of *Hesse*, and *Henry* Duke of *Brunswick*, to raise fifteen hundred Horse and a few companyes of Infantery.

The boores were pitched upon a hill by *Frankhus* pretty well intrenched within their own car.s, but very ill armed, and worse Disciplined. The Princes, though slenderly attended, contemned and pitied together that rude troope, and sent to offer them impunity and a generall pardon, if they would but yield the authors of the sedition and return home: But *Muncer* un'erstood not that Gospel, that one man should dye for the nation. He fals to preaching, and expounds that sollicitation of the Princes, as an argument of their weakenesse and fearefulnesse; Tels the boores that he was sent from God to command and lead them in this action: That their part was to obey like *Abraham*, who being commanded to kill his son, went about it, though he was uncertain of the event; That they should certainly overthrow both these and all other enemies of God, it being Gods promise that the righteous shall wash his foot in the bloud of the wicked, and that the meeke shall inherit the earth; That these Princes were but Tyrants and theeves, sucking the blood of the people, to live at ease and maintaine their pride and wantonnesse; That they maintained the Masse, and therefore deserved to be extermined: Then he exhorted them to be valiant in the Lord, and kill every mothers sonne of their enemies, for an acceptable sacrifice unto God; assuring them that God himselfe that cannot lye, had promised him victo-

ry, and commanded him to deſtroy Princes and Magiſtrates, endowing him with ſuch ſtrength that he was able to turne all their bullets back with his coate; Hereupon perceiving a Rainebow in the Skie and turning his eyes towards his Colours, where a Raine-bow was painted; Looke up (ſaid he) to Heaven, here is for you a joyfull ſigne of Gods favor, that Raine-bow the very embleme of our Colours, and bee ſure that God promiſeth us that he will be our Standardbearer and fight for us himſelfe, Come then let's fight valiantly under Gods Standard.

That new piece of impoſture made a ſtrong impreſſion in ſome. Yet the Princes drawing neere with a warlike march, made a ſtronger impreſſion of feare in theſe rude Souldiers, than *Muncers* revelations & ſignes, for the Princes were incenſed by a late cruel treachery of *Muncer*, who had put to death, againſt the Law of Armes and Nations, a hopefull young Gentleman ſent to him to treate of agreement. The Princes began to play with their Ordinance, I cannot ſay to breake the Rankes of the boores, for they keepe neither Ranke nor File, and ſcarce keep their underſtanding, for they neither advanced nor fled, nor put themſelves in defence, but fell a ſinging, *Come Holy Ghoſt*, expecting that God ſhould fight for them from Heaven, according to *Muncer's* promiſe: But when their intrenchment of Carts was broken, and the Princes army came to handy blows, away fled all the boores, ſome one way, ſome another, but the moſt part to *Frankhus*, 5000 of them were ſlaine, *Frankhus* taken the ſame day, and 300 men taken and executed.

Muncer was found hid at *Frankhus* and lying on a bed faigning himſelfe to be one of the Town that had been long ſick of an ague, which his quaking for feare did imitate to the life; but Letters being found about him from *Albert* of *Manſfield*, to diſſuade him from his ſeditious courſes, he was known to be *Muncer*, which yet this lying Prophet denied long.

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Being brought before Duke *George* of *Saxony*, and the Lantgrave of *Hesse*, and demanded why he misled the simple people to sedition; He answered that hee had done no more than his duty, and that Magistrates that receive not the doctrine of the Gospell must be dealt with by such wayes. These reasons of his were confuted by the Rack, where when he cryed out, Duke *George* told him, Thou sufferest now *Muncer*, but thinke how many poore people have suffered by thee this day; At which *Muncer* laughed aloud, and said, *Why they would have it so*, meaning that the people loved to bee cozened and misled, and that nothing could winne their hearts but sedition.

Shortly after *Phifer* and other heads of the rebellion were executed at *Mulhus*, and *Muncer* a while after, who shewed a great deale of dejection and perturbation in his end, and could not so much as make confession of his Faith, with much a do could he speake after the Duke of *Brunswick* who taught him what he should say: Yet when he was ready to be executed, he acknowledged his errour openly, and made an exhortation to the Princes and Nobles, to use their subjects and vassals with more moderation; which if they did, the people would breake no more into such rebellions and outrages; he desired them diligently to reade the booke of Kings, there to learne their duty, and Gods judgements against unjustice and oppression. He was beheaded, and his head set on a high pole in the fields.

In the meane while *Luther*, because he was defamed by the Papists, as the author or occasion of those troubles, was sending godly exhortations over all *Germany*, to exhort the commons to peace and obedience to their Superiours, and rather to suffer for righteousnesse, then defend the Truth with unrighteousnesse, and that this was the Divels cunning to raise sedition by false brethren, to bring the Truth of God into hatred and obloquie.

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And to the commons of *Suevia*, that had been up in armes before *Muncer*, and continued still in rebellion, Hee writ a grave admonition Representing that, although they were oppreſt by their Princes, who therefore deſerved to be puniſht, yet it belonged not to them to do the execution; That they muſt not beleeve the Sermons of every preacher, for Satan (ſaith he) under colour of the Goſpel hath in theſe times raiſed many ſeditious & bloudy teachers; You are oppreſt by your Superiours that take your eſtates from you, they do unjuſtly; but you do more unjuſtly to take that Iuriſdiction from them which is none of yours; And whereas they take but few things from you by exactions and too great burdens, you take all from them when you take away their authority: Is this obeying Chriſt who commands us not to reſiſt evill, but to him that ſtriketh us on the one cheek to turne the other, and let him that will take our Coate, to take our Cloak alſo? Nay, it is the duty of Chriſtians to ſuffer and undergo the Croſſe, not to reſiſt and ſeeke revenge and ſmite with the ſword; When *Peter* would fight to ſave his Maſter, a lawfull defence if ever was any, Hee bids him not to ſtrike with the ſword, becauſe that ſtriking was oppoſing the Magiſtrate for a private revenge, and to ſuch oppoſers of the Magiſtrate that Sentence belongeth, They that ſtrike with the ſword, ſhall periſh with the ſword: But I perceive the Divels plot, that ſince he could not deſtroy me by the Pope, he ſeekes to undo me by theſe violent bloudthirſty preachers: And do you take heed of them, for they caſt you headlong into a precipice, that they may riſe by your fall, and get honors and dignities with your perill.

That *Suevian* Rebellion was ſoon after ſuppreſt, partly by the vigorous oppoſition of the Princes, partly by their own wearines and diſorder, the limbes of that faction dropping off here and there, like a rotten carkeiſe that can no longer hang together.

Muncer

Muncer and his associates being punisht, *Carolostadius* was not farre from the like danger; for having left *Wittemberg* where he feared *Luther*, he kept conventicles in *Saxony*, associating himselfe with frantick men that boasted of Visions, and Colloquies with God, and a particular spirit; There also he writ a bitter book against *Luther*, and against his owne Prince, for which misdemeanours he was sought to be executed with *Muncer's* complices; In that extremity hee called upon *Luther's* helpe, whom he had so much provoked, and was saved by his intercession.

Chap. III.

The growth of Anabaptisme, The Tragicall disorders committed at Munster.

THe root and branch of fanaticall factions seemed then to be cut off, but the seeds remained, and brought forth many new twigs of the same kind: Presently after *Muncer*, one of greater learning and parts, began to preach the same doctrine at *Strasburg*, and was empriſoned for it by the Rulers of the City, his name was *Melchior Hopman*: And scarce two yeares after *Muncer*, *Germany* was full of *Anabaptists*; A new name then, but in effect the old sect of *Muncer*, with some additions: They denyed the Incarnation of Christ in the holy Virgins wombe, condemned the Baptisme of children, and re-baptized themselves, and all that embraced their sect: They would not allow Christians to recover their owne by Law, nor to take an Oath, nor beare the Office of Magistrate, and they pulled down Magistrates by way of fact where they had strength, and gave the power of the sword to their Ministers and Prophets, who decided all differences, and judged of all cases by Scripture, and undertooke Anno 1527.

to kill all the Princes of the World, and cut off all the ungodly with another sword than that of the Spirit: They taught that in their Church all were holy, that none can bee saved that will not make his private goods common, that it is lawfull to have many wives, that all learning is prophane, and that meane ignorant men are the fittest to expound Scripture, that there must be no ordinary calling in the Church, but every one may speake as hee is inspired by the Holy Ghost, that Christ must reigne over all the World, and therefore all other Kings and Princes, and their adherents must bee slaine, till there bee none left to reigne but Christ, and what they taught they went really about to practise.

Melchior Hopman being kept prisoner at *Strasburg*, and his Sect severely repress by the wise Magistrate; That crew dispersed it selfe in *Westphalia*, *Frise Holland*, and most part of the *Low Countries*, where they got a very great party, yet among the common sort of people only: *Lambertus Hortensius* one of my Authors affirmeth confidently that among that numerous rabble of seditious people, not one was found that ever was a Schollar, and very few that could reade or write. When they were confuted by reasons or testimonies of Scripture, their answer was, that the Spirit taught them otherwise, and that the Spirit bloweth where hee listeth, and doth not inspire every one.

These fancies were increased by one *George* of *Leyden*, with many grosse and monstrous Additions: The sect by his seduction in short time grew so strong, as to despise all Rule, all Iudges, and all Courts, and chuse private Rulers among themselves, who determined of all causes and sate upon life and death.

But their rage could not keep long at home, They would sometimes rush out of Cities in great troopes, and ransack Convents and Rich mens houses, taking for their warrant

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the example of the Israelites, that tooke the spoyle of the Egyptians: Yet in these incursions they made Conscience at the first to enter into any Temple of those that were not re-baptized, but made no conscience to lye with their wives as left for a prey to the godly.

This was their preparation for the day of Iudgement, about which they had many revelations: One of their Prophets proclaimed that within three dayes the last Iudgement should come; This made many of them to leave their houses, and get up into high trees there to expect the comming of Christ, but having expected three dayes fasting, they returned faint and weake, and met with another Iudgement at home, for the Magistrate inquired after the Authors and promoters of that deluſion, and punished them.

Of all Cities of the *Low Countries*, *Amsterdam* was most pestered with that sect, the great concourse and traffick giving them faire opportunity to resort to that famous place: Where being many times repress with fines and imprisonments and wholesome severity, they would disperse themselves over the Country, filling all with clamour, scattering papers in the high wayes, threatning ruine and destruction to all that would not adhere to them, and leave lands and houses to come out of *Babylon*, for *Babylon* they would overthrow, and within the circuit of *Babylon*, they included all Magistracy and Civill Government, and all wealth and greatnesse; A great quarrell they had with the *Babylonian Gold.*

But the whole World was little enough for their ambition, It was their serious intent to make themselves masters of the World, which they both professed and attempted, beginning their Empire at *Munster* in *Westphalia.*

It grieveth me to say that in *Munster*, truth made way for errour: For in the yeare 1532, one *Bernard Rotman* came to

S. *Maurice* Church hard by *Munster*, where he preached good doctrine and converted many, so that the people would have him admitted into the City; Which the Papists fearing, gave him a summe of money, upon condition hee should go to some other place, which hee did, and absented himselfe for some months, in which time he improved his gifts and learning, and returned againe better furnisht to encounter the adversary.

Being received at Saint *Maurice* with greater applause than before, some Citizens of the best sort brought him into the City, and because the Church doores were shut against him, they made him a Pulpit in the Church-yard, and shortly after told the Papists, that if they would not open the doore of some Church, they would open it themselves. *Rotman* seeing the progresse of the Reformation, sends to *Hasse* for some helpe, and they sent to him two Divines of *Mirpurg*; With these by the counsell and authority of the best of the Town, he challenged Papists in dispute, and presented thirty Articles of Papisticall errours to the Senate, offering to prove that they were contrary to holy Scripture: The Senat sends for the Clergy of the City, and requireth them that since they had alwayes profest that their doctrine was grounded upon holy Writ, they would now make it good: The Clergy finding themselves unexpectedly put to it, answered plainely that it was more than they could do and that they were sure they had a good intention, though there might be ignorance and errour in their profession: Whereupon the Senate interdicted them to teach the people any more, and gave their places to the new teachers that had detected the impostures of the old.

The expulsed Clergy retire to their Bishop and Prince, (for the Bishop of *Munster* is Prince of the City) The then Bishop was Count *Francis Waldeck*, to whom *Friderick* Archbishop of *Collen* had lately yeelded the place. The Bishop pre-

presently stops all the passages of victuals to the City, and raiseth some forces to compell the Citizens to restore all things in the former State; But the Citizens by a night enterprize, tooke his best men, and the richest of the Popish party lying in a little Town, whence the Bishop was gone the day before: This gave occasion to a parley and a composition, by the mediation of the Lantgrave of *Hesse*, wherein it was agreed upon, that six Churches should bee given to the Reformed party, and that the Cathedrall should remain as it was before. This agreement was made Feb. 14. 1538.

Hitherto all was wel, if it could have stayd there; But before the swinge of the former commotion was well stayed, there comes to the Town, in an ill houre, a pestilent *Anabaptist*, a Taylor of *Leyden*, *Iohn Becold*, better knowne by the name of *Iohn of Leyden*: This man begins to conferre with Ministers and People, about the Baptisme of children; maintaining it to be unlawfull, seducing many and sowring the new Lump of that Church with the Leaven of his perverse doctrine: With him, or presently after him came a very great multitude of his fraternity, most of them *Hollanders*. These keeping conventicles in the night, got a great party in the City, and incensed one another with desperate resolutions: They had with them one *Herman Strapreda*, brought up under *Henry Rell*, who had beene lately executed at *Vtrecht*, for preaching *Anabaptisme* and sedition; At the feet of that *Gamaliel*, one may thinke what doctrin he had learned: This man they got to bechosen colleague to *Rotman*, before his heresie was knowne, but he made it knowne presently, preaching openly against the Baptisme of children, and none more eager to oppose him than *Rotman*: The Magistrates and people, not yet infected with that new doctrine, seeling so much distraction arising among themselves, commanded the Forreigners and Sectaries to goe out of the City, but they went out at one gate, and came in againe at the other,

saying that they must not desert Gods cause, but doe the worke which God had given them to do: The Senat to prevent a sedition, appointed the *Evangeliques* and the *Anabaptistes* to meet in a publique Conference, and there *Rotman* betrayed the good cause, and disputed contrary to his preaching, condemning the Baptisme of children as impious and execrable; But hee was so well opposed by a worthy Divine *Hermannus Basilius*, that the Senate was satisfied, and concluded for the Truth, and the teachers *Anabaptists* were sentenced to be banisht; Who when they alleadged that they could not safely travell through the Bishops dominions, the Senate obtained a safeconduct for them, and gave them money for their journey: But they being resolved before never to goe away, lay lurking among their sectaries, which increased so fast, (the meane people of the Towne being seduced every day, and strangers flocking to the Towne continually in great troopes) that the Magistrates fearing least the *Anabaptistes* should drive the *Evangeliques* out of their Churches, kept all the Churches shut up but one.

In this distressed case of their Church and State, the Lantgrave of *Hesse* sent them, at the request of the Senate, two Divines, *Theodoricus Fabritius*, and *Iohannes Melsingerus*; But the last seeing the deplorable face of businesses in that place, and fearing his owne danger, returned home, *Fabritius* remained, and among so much contradiction discharged the part of a worthy champion of Iesus Christ, till the *Anabaptistes* having got the upper hand, thrusted him and all the *Evangeliques* out of the City. And to set a bound to the unlimitted extravagancy of the Anabaptisticall spirit, he composed a book of *Common Prayers*, with the forme of administring the Sacraments and performing other Ecclesiasticall duties, and it was published by the authority of the Senate.

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There was also another worthy Divine, *Peter Wirtem*, who having beene silenced by the *Anabaptistes*, was now by the Senate and People allowed to Preach againe: But he was no Preacher for the new brethren, they turned him out of Office presently, at the instigation of *Rotman*, who soone after provoked *Fabritius* and his colleagues to dispute: *Fabritius* accepted the challenge, and the Senate appointed a Conference, naming some learned and good men to be the umpires; But *Rotman* and his brethren fearing the Touch, began to find exceptions and devise shifts to avoyd the dispute, whereby they lost much credit among the people.

To wipe off that staine, they tooke a more compendious course: One of them faining himselfe seized with a Prophetical spirit ran through the City, crying, Repent, and bee Bap ized againe, else the wrath of God will fall upon you: This stirred the people, and many ran also with him, crying the same words: Many of the simpler sort were re-baptized for feare of the wrath of God, and many more for feare of the wrath of men: For this crying and running through the streets, ended in ransacking the best houses, and laying violent hands on the owners: Then many that lay hid before, came forth, and rushed into the Market place, crying out, that all that were not re-baptized must bee killed presently, as Vngodly and Heathen; And seizing upon the Towne-House and the weapons therein, they began to domineere as in a conquered place.

The *Evangeliques* on the other side gathered themselves in a place called *Overwater*, and tooke many of their enemies, and both the sides were fortifying the places where they stood: Three dayes they stood thus without doing any greatharme one to the other, til giving hostages on both sides, they fell to a composition; That every one should enjoy the freedome of his Religion, and all should go home and live in peace.

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This tumult was towards the end of *December*, 1533.

Anno 1534. But this composition gave but time to the *Anabaptistes* to strengthen their party, for *Rotman* and *Bernard Knipperdoling*, the most stirring of that faction, sent letters to the townes of *Osnburg*, *Wesel*, *Corsweld* and *Warendorp*, of which the tenour was, that God had sent a holy Prophet to *Munster*, who spake wonders, and shewed the right way to Salvation: That if they would leave their houses and come to *Munster* in all haste, they should get ten times more than they left at home, and with the spirituall wealth get all worldly riches.

These faire promises drew all the skumme of the neighbouring Townes to *Munster*, the poorest and idlest sort liking that Religion well, that maketh all men alike and all goods common, and puts down those Lawes and Magistrates that refrained their licentiousnesse. In a short time the City was full of strangers and vagrants, that looked upon the City as a Land of Promise, where they must make a new Plantation, and expulse the *Canaanites*. At their comming the richest of the Town, being frighted, thought it their safest course, fairely and quietly to give them place, and without noise withdrew themselves out of the City.

The *Anabaptistes* seeing themselves strong, ran to Saint *Maurice* Church and burnt it with all the houses about it, pillaged all the Churches, defaced the Cathedrall, depopulated the Convents, and Colledges, and burnt a faire great Library belonging to the Fryers; And for the finall exploit drove all the *Evangeliqus* out of the City, but some few (whom they mistooke for *Anabaptistes*) crying, Get ye hence all yee wicked, else you shall all be slaine. And with such a violence they put them out, that some women great with child miscarried in the tumult.

In this banishment the grieved Citizens suffered double persecution, for being turned out bare by the *Anabaptistes*, they

they were taken by the Bishop, who the day before had encamped before the City, and by him used as enemies: some were in danger to have lost their heads, as the worthy Divine *Peter Wirtem*, who was saved by the mediation of the Lantgrave of *Hessen*. This forced the rest of the *Evangeliques* to stay in the City, though there was little choyce betweene staying in the frying pan, or leaping into the fire.

And now the *Anabaptistes* being Maisters of the City, began to order their new State, for though they were enemies to all Superiority and Order; Yet necessity and Nature it selfe forced them to elect some Superiours of their own: They made two Consuls, *Knipperdulling* and *Kippenbrok*, and twenty two Senators or Aldermen, that had the Civill power: The Prophets were to rule matters of Religion, under which name they governed Church and Common-wealth; for all civill matters were brought within the compasse of Religion and Conscience, and whatsoever a Prophet said to be revealed unto him, past for Law.

The most famous of these Prophets was *Iohn Matthias*, a Baker of *Harlem*, who was in effect a perpetuall Dictator in *Munster*, that made Lawes and changed them after his pleasure: By him was the foresaid order made; His chiefe adjunct was *Iohn* of *Leyden*, and the next *Bernard Knipperdulling*: By a revelation of *Iohn Mathias*, an order was made upon paine of death, that all the gold and silver and moveable goods of the Town should be broughtto the common stock, for which they appointed a publique house: The order was obeyed, more for feare than conscience, for two maids Propheteses tooke upon them to find out the fraud, and the severall houses were searched by a Deacon; To that common stock were brought all the goods of those that were driven out of the City.

With that common stock they kept foure great ordinaries in the foure quarters of the Towne, where all fed in common, none being allowed to dyet at home, unlesse he were

sick: Plenty of provision they had, and they husbanded it very ill, feasting every day till the Bishop that besieged them, began to cut off their victuals, and then they stinted themselves, but with too large a stint, which was to have change of meat every third day, one day fresh meate, the other day hung meate, and bacon, and the third day milk, butter and cheese.

I read of no great feats of armes in this siege, Once onely the Bishop received a notable repulse by *Iohn Matthias*, who was a Generall as well as a Prophet; With easie labour hee had so fortified the Towne, which is most strong by Nature, that he had made it impregnible, so that the Bishop despairing to take it by force, went about to take it by famine. Indeed the negligence of the besiegers and the security of the besieged, are the onely things remarquable in this siege.

The Prophets then neglecting the Bishop converted their care to the spirituall governement, and commanded that none should keepe any bookes but Scripture: So all the bookes that could be found, but Bibles, were brought to a publique place and a bonfire made of them.

From executing of bookes they fell to execution of persons; *Hubert Truteling* a black smith, seeing *Iohn Matthias* passe by, said, Here goeth a shitten Prophet; For this offence he was brought to the Congregation and condemned to death: *Iohn Matthias* would himselfe bee the executioner, and wounded him with a Halbard; the wound being not mortall, he brings him to another place and shootes him thorow with a pistoll, then taking compassion on him, hee pardons him, saying, that God was appeased towards him, and that he had a revelation that the man should not dye of this, yet the poore man dyed a few dayes after.

To make amends for his false Prophesie, He runs in a mad mood over all the City, bearing a Pike, crying, that God

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the Father had commanded him to drive the enemy backe from the City, and so rushed alone into the enemies campe, without feare and wit, and was presently killed.

Iohn Matthias being dead, *Iohn* of *Leyden* comforteth the people, saying that hee knew long before by revelation that *Iohn Matthias* was to dye that death, and that himselfe should marry his wife, as hee did shortly after, though hee had one before, but this was one of singular beauty, able to make a lusty young Prophet to set up the doctrine of Polygamy.

But hee fell to other worke before he stirred that point, *Knipperdulling* came out with a revelation, that they that were in high places should be brought down to the lowest, & they that were in the lowest, raised to the highest: But *Iohn* of *Leyden* met him in his own kind with another revelation, that since it was Gods pleasure that those that were in the highest places should be brought down to the lowest, he was sent from God to put him down from the place of Consull, and make him the Hang-man, and to that purpose hee gave him from God the sword of Iustice.

But there was need of more revelations for that great worke of alteration of the Government; *Iohn* of *Leyden* was led by his Propheticall spirit upon the City wals, where hee put off his cloths and ranne naked through the City, crying, *The King of Sion is come, the King of Sion is come*; Then returning home, hee fals into a deep Propheticall sleep, and dreames three dayes and three nights together: Being awaked, hee comes forth and speaketh never a word, but calleth by signes for a table-booke, like *Zachariah*. There hee sets downe twelve men, all coblers, tinkers, smiths and meane tradesmen, but one that was a Gentleman of *Munster*; to these he assigneth the Government of the Common-wealth, putting down the order set up by *Iohn Matthias*, and affirming that this was the Fathers good will. In that paper also he writeth some conclusions, which he chargeth the Preachers to teach

the people, Or elſe he would have them ratified by the Congregation without the Preachers: The ſumme of all was that a man is not tyed to one wife, but that he may marry as many as hee pleaſeth. And when moſt of his Doctors would not approve of that monſtruous paradoxe, he citeth them before his twelve Magiſtrates, and there he recovered his tongue, keeping a great clamour, throwing downe his cloths upon the ground, and the new Teſtament upon them, and ſwearing by that holy book, that the doctrine which he had announced was revealed unto him from Heaven, and threatning them all, that if they conſented not to this doctrin, God would withdraw his mercy from them. To teſtifie his evidence of ſpirit and power, he commanded the firſt oppoſer of that new Goſpell to be beheaded, which was done preſently.

For three dayes together there was preaching concerning matrimony for the confirmation of that opinion; But the beſt confirmation was his practiſe, for preſently he married three wives, one of which was the relict of that grand Prophet *Iohn Matthias*, by whom ſhe was with child, and married again and again, till hee had fifteen wives: Many followed his example, and it began to be a matter of great praiſe to multiply wives.

This ſeemeth to have been his firſt motive to broach that doctrine; A Souldier of the Biſhop that had changed party, and was harboured where *Iohn* of *Leiden* lay, obſerved in the night that this holy Prophet left his bed and went to the maids bed: *Iohn of Leyden* ſeeing himſelfe diſcovered, in the morning called the Souldier aſide, and gave him gold, deſiring him to keep his counſell: But after miſtruſting the Souldiers tongue, he thought it ſafer to countenance the fact by a publique doctrine.

This doctrine then was readily embraced by thoſe whoſe age and temper was apteſt to conſult with fleſh and bloud;

None

None refraining himselfe from multiplication of wives for want or covetousnesse, for their wives were kept upon the common stock. Neither did they keep any face of order or any shew of modesty in those marriages, for presently after the receiving of that Law, the brethren ran to the handsomest women of the City, striving who should be served first, and lay with them without any forme of contract, so that within few dayes there was not one woman of 14 yeares of age but was violated.

But those of the City that had yet some remnant of sound mind, being extreamely grieved with this disorder, and groaning under that foule tyranny, made a party and layd hold of *Iohn* of *Leyden* and *Knipperdulling* and all the Prophets; which comming to the eares of the frantike rabble of people, which made the greatest number, they tooke armes and rescued the Prophets and killed fifty of their adversaries, most of them in cold bloud and with severall kinds of devised cruelties, *Iohn* of *Leyden* encouraging the murtherers, and crying, that he that would do God service, should give the first blow.

Chap. IV.

Continuation of the Siege of Munster, *The reigne of* Iohn *of* Leyden, *The taking of* Munster, *The deserved punishment of the Rebels.*

WHile they were thus wiving and striving in *Munster*, the Bishop had faire play, if he could have husbanded the occasion. Some weake attempts he made, with ill successe, and having till then borne the charges of the warre alone, hee was afterwards assisted with men and money by *Herman* Arch-bishop of *Coln*, and *Iohn* Prince of *Cleves*, and

asked succour of all the Cities, of the *Rhyne*, about which demaund, there was a meeting appointed to be held at *Coblents*, *Decemb.* 13. 1534.

This long delay gave time to *Iohn* of *Leyden* to project new designes, He declared that the Spirit of Prophecy was retired from him, and reposed upon *Iohn Tuscocurer* a Goldsmith of *Warendorp*; And this new Prophet having called the Congregation together, declared that it was the will of the Heavenly Father that *Iohn* of *Leyden* should be King of the Vniverse; And that with mighty Armyes hee should kill all Kings and Princes, and destroy all the ungodly, and save the people that love righteousnesse, and that hee must possesse the Kingdome of his Father *David*, till the time come that he must deliver the Kingdome to his Father; And that all the ungodly being killed, the godly should reigne in the World, Whereupon *Iohn* of *Leyden* fell on his knees, and lifting up his hands to Heaven, said, Men and brethren, so much I knew long ago, but I would not reveale it; Now God hath made choyce of another to beare witnesse to that truth; Then said *Tuscocurer* again, Thus saith the Lord, As I set *Saul* to be King in *Israel*, and after him *David* taken from the sheepfold, so I have set *Iohn Becold* my Prophet to bee King in *Sion*: And when the Senat refused that Prophecy, the Prophet refused the Senat, and appealed to the Congregation, saying, give eare Israel, Thou shalt abrogate thy Magistrates and put down thy Preachers, and instead of them establish twelve simple men without any learning; them thou shalt command that they read my word unto my people, and without any helpe but my spirit expound it, into them will I powre the spirit of wisdome and understanding. Then giving a sword to *Iohn of Leyden*, And to thee (saith he) father *Becold*, the Father giveth this sword, and calleth thee not only to be King in *Sion*, but over all the World, and to extend thine Empire unto the ends of the earth.

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This Oracle was followed with great shoutings and acclamations of the people, crying, *God save the King*, and presently he was brought to Saint *Lamberts* Church-yard, and there again proclaimed King.

There the new King created foure Counsellors of State, the chiefe whereof was one *Gerard*, a Book-binder, one *Talbeck* he made Lord Steward of his houshold, *Girard Kippenbrok* Treasurer of his plate and jewels, *Knipperdulling* Governour of the City, and appointed twelve Archers of his Guard.

This Taylor King presently made use of his skill to make himselfe fine in cloths, He transl ated the copes and carpets of the Churches and Convents, into doublets, and breeches, and cloakes, which set off his Majesty all in gold and silver; His horses wore a suitable livery, richly harnessed with golden and silver saddles and footcloths; he had great change of rich apparell, in which he appeared abroad, having his chiefe Officers and Counsellours riding before him in great State; Next to him rid two young men richely attired, the one carrying a naked sword with a golden hilt, set with precious stones, the other carryed a Bible and a triple Crown of gold of exquisite work, glittering with diamonds. Himselfe wore a great chaine of gold about his neck, like a Collar of some noble Order, with a golden Globe having a golden Sword thorough it, hanging at the chaine, with this *Motto* about the Globe, *Rex Iustitiæ hujus Mundi*, The King of Righteousnesse of this World. After him followed fifty pensioners clad with parti coloured garments of ash colour and grasse-green, white caps, and golden rings in every finger, making the ash colour an embleme of mortification, the grasse-green of regeneration, the white caps of innocency, the golden rings of charity: But among these Prophetical riddles, hee ordered his Court with so much State, and so disposed his Officers, that if he had been a King borne, hee could

could have done it no better; So much all his adversaries acknowledge.

In that Royall array hee shewed himselfe three times a week in publique, and went up to a high Throne set up with great magnificence: Vnder him sate *Knipperdulling* Governour of the City, and lower his foure great Counsellours of State. In that Court he judged of all controversies, most of which were about divorces, for by his new orders any man that was weary of his wife might take another, and as many more as he listed, which could not but multiply suites, and give worke to the new King, and his Counsellours, and Prophets.

In that Court *Knipperdulling* would ever come out with some *Bedlam* rapture, Once he fell flat to the ground, and creeping upon his hands and feet, he went to severall persons of the Assembly, and blowing them in the mouth, said, The Father hath sanctified thee, receive the holy Ghost: Another time he fel a dancing, saying, So I danced once with my little harlot, and now the Heavenly Father hath commanded me that I should dance so in the Kings presence: Another time before the King came he sate in his chaire of Majesty, and there Prophecied that he should dye and rise again, and that then the eyes of the blind should bee open; But the King comming, shewed him that the spirits of the Prophets must be subject unto the Prophets, for he pulled him downe and committed him to the layle for three dayes.

This Ioly Taylor having thus stitched up a Kingdom in hast, turned his serious care to go thorow stitch with it: For that there was need of supply to remove the Bishop that hindered his work; And because all should be done in a Propheticall way, *Tuiscocurer*, his chief agent, came to him (as it seemes by his appointment) one day as he was sitting in his Throne with more than ordinary Majesty, and told him, King *Iohn*, the Gospell must be renewed by thee; Thus saith

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the Lord God, go and say to the King of *Sion*, that he prepare my holy Supper in the Church-yard of the great Church, and that hee chuse Teachers of my word, to send into the foure Quarters of the world, to teach all men the wayes of righteousnesse, and bring them by the Spirit of their mouth, into my Sheepfold: so a publike Communion was celebrated, but they made it a full meale; A great feast it was, both for the persons, & the meat, for they were above foure thousand men, and had three courses: But between these courses there was a foule intercourse, for the King accused a man of Treason, and cut off his head with his own hand, and returned merry to supper; Then with his bloudy hand he tooke upon him to administer the body and bloud of Christ, assisted with the Queene (sometime *Iohn Matthias* his wife) who then did the office of a Minister or Deacon, and administred the Communion, the like did the principall officers of the state, saying, take this and announce the Lords death.

After supper the King asked the whole Congregation, whether they were all heartily disposed to do Gods Will, and to suffer and dye for the faith, to which the people answered with one voyce that they were all in that mind; then *Tuiscocurer* arose and layd, thus saieth the Lord, chuse men among my people, to send into the foure quarters of the world, to do great wonders among the nations, & publish my wondrous things among the strange people; then he read a note of the names of those whom God had chosen for that legation, of whom himselfe was one. they were 26, (*Sleydan* saith two more) 7. were sent to *Osnburge*, sixe to *Cocsweld*, five to *Warendorp*, eight to *Suzat*; To them the King gave certain peices of Gold, with this inscription, on the one side, *Vnlesse one be borne by water and by the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdome of Heaven.* On the other side, *The Word was made flesh, one God, one faith, one baptisme.* They were to present that coyne to every Town where their doctrine was not recei-

ved, and leave it there for a Testimony against them.

These new Apostles went into the Cities where they were sent, crying in the streets that the people should repent, and joyne with them, else they should shortly perish: With that noyse having raised a tumult, they were apprehended and brought to the Magistrates, before whom they spread a cloak upon the ground, and threw their Coyne upon it, saying that they were sent by the Father to offer them peace, which if they refused, they would leave that Coyne amongst them as a pledge of Gods wrath against their ungratefulnesse, and hardnesse of heart: That the time was come, foretold by the Prophets, that the whole world should follow righteousnesse which God would worke by their King, and when he had made righteousnesse to raigne over all the world, that then he should give up the Kingdome unto his father.

Being questioned by the Magistrates, first with faire words, and after by tortures about their faith, their conversation, and the state of the citty of *Munster*, hey answered that none in the world but they, had the true Doctrine, which they were ready to seale with their bloud: that since the Apostles times the word of God had not been purely preached, and no justice was in the earth: That there was foure great Prophets, two good, *David* of *Delft*, and *Iohn* of *Leyden*; and two bad, the *Pope*, and *Luther*, but *Luther* the worse of the two. Being asked by what Scripture they could justifie their unjust dispossessing of so many good men, from their houses and goods, and making bold with their wives; They answered that the time was come foretold by Christ, that the meeke shall inherit the earth; That in the same manner God had given the goods of the Egyptians to the *Israelites*, and among the goods they reckoned the wives; That they might lawfully take many wives, upon condition they should lye with them all till they were with child, and when one was with child, they might take a new one in her stead.

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That they held women at twelve yeares of age, to be fit for husbands. That they put away barren women, or past child-bearing, and committed them to curatours, as being good for nothing.

As for the provision of the Towne, they said that S. *Iames* Church was all full of mault. That they had barly for two yeares, and many thousand quarters of meale, and great store of Bacon: A false Relation, for soone after they fell to eating of dogs and leather in *Munster*: They constantly affirmed that their King expected a great army out of *Holland* and *Frize*, which as soone as it was come, he would begin his expedition to subdue the world, and kill all Kings for their perverse administration of justice, and that they knew by revelation that their King of *Sion*, would shortly be King of the whole earth: They persisted in denying all Magistrates but their own King, for which they were put to death, as enemies of all lawes and order, and brands of sedition; and there was an end of that Apostleship, that should have preached a Gospell of rebellion over all the world.

This legation was in *October*, 1534, at which time, *Munster* began to be short of victuals: this occasioned a plot of some of the Town to take the King, and send him bound to the Bishop: The plot was discovered to the King, who thought it not safe to make the Authors known, only he committed the Town and himselfe to twelve trusty Captaines, to whom he divided a government in the aire of severall Provinces, sparing no Prince but the Lantgrave of *Hesse*, whom he hoped to draw to his party; And with his smooth tongue he pacified the people, assuring them that by Easter they should certainly be delivered from all their enemies.

The Princes of the Empire, seeing their danger, if this pretended King of the world came out and met with his confederates, met at *Coblents* as they had appointed, and tooke a course for the Bishops helpe, and the streight besieg-

ing of the Towne, and sent letters to the people of *Munster* to represent them their fault, and their danger, and that if they did not submit to their naturall Prince, they should draw all the forces of the Empire upon them: This was about the end of *December*, 1534.

They answered many words in commendation of their holy purpose, yet nothing to the purpose, and sent private letters besides to the Lantgrave of *Hesse*, to perswade him to joyn with them, for the killing of all the wicked, & establishing the Kingdome of the righteous in the World, and they sent him a booke of that argument, whose title was, *De restitutione*, the Lantgrave caused it to be answered by his Divines.

To draw towards the last Acts of that wild King, among
An. 1535. the Prophets that were taken, one called *Henry Hilversum* was saved by the Bishop, who after some private conference with him, let him go; And he returning to *Munster*, said that God had delivered him out of prison by an Angell like *Peter*, and had sent him to announce to the King that he had given him three rich Cities, *Amsterdam*, *Deventer*, and *Wesel*, which should shortly embrace his party: The King gladly received *Hilversum*, and made him one of his Court, and presently dispatched one *Iames* of *Kemp* to *Amsterdam*, to bring that City to his obedience, which he was like to have done, having by his seditious doctrine stirred the most part of the people against the Magistrate, but that the Count of *Hochstrat*, Governour of *Holland*, opposed them with great wisdome and with a high hand.

Soone after *John* of *Leyden*, hearing a report that many of his sect in *Holland*, and *Frize*, were wandring in great troopes like sheep having no shepheard, sent them one *John Giles* that had some skil in war, with a great summe of money, charging him that like another *Moses*, he would be their leader in the wilderneſſe, and bring them to *Canaan*, that is, to *Munster*.

But

But when much time past, and hee heard nothing of those wandring *Israelites*, nor of their *Moses*, he sent the Prophet *Henry Hilversum*, and one *John Nortell* into *Holland*, and *Frize*, to hasten them, or raise new troopes.

For that expedition he had loaden *Henry Hilversum* with so much Gold that he could scarce go, wherefore he went no further than the Bishops campe, where he stayed. *John Nortell* went as farre as *Deventer*, and soone after returned without effect. *Hilversum* writ a sensible letter to the people of *Munster*, wherein he acknowledged that his former Prophesies were impostures, and exhorted them to open their eyes to see how they were deluded by a company of rascals, what beastly life they led, having violated all Lawes of pudicity and honesty, and what danger they were in, of a miserable destruction.

These letters moved the hearts of many that already were weary of that life, for their publike ordinary grew short, and was reduced to one meale a day, & a short one, where their community of goods was violated, for every one had his bread by weight: But while they fasted in the Town, they feasted in the Court, for the King fared sumptuously to the very last. Which one of his wives disliking, said once, that she thought not that such a course was pleasant to God, that in the publike misery, while some pined for hunger, others should surfet with plenty. The King being told of it, brought her to the market place with his other wives, made her kneel down, and cut off her head, then made his other wives to sing and give praises for it to their heavenly father. Then he led a dance, and commanded all the people to dance, and rejoyce with him, though the poore people had no great heart to dance, being fed with bread and salt only.

At the same time two young men of the Town, weary of that fare, were taken running away, and brought backe unto the King, who killed them both with his own hand. And to

appeaſe the people, of whom many began to repent of their errour, and murmured againſt him, he made them a fine ſpeech, ſaying that he would never have thought that they being borne again by a new Baptiſme would ſhew themſelvs ſo impatient in their ſufferings for Gods cauſe, whereas they ſhould have followed *Pauls* example, bearing hunger, nakedneſſe and cold, to attain to the haven of ſalvation. That God was powerfull enough to ſend them Manna and quailes from Heaven. That he had great troopes in *Holland* and *Frize*, that would certainly come with great proviſion of victuals, and beate the enemy backe. That God had revealed him, that at Eaſter they ſhould be delivered for certain.

To confirme the people he would from that time appeare every day abroad in his greateſt glory, and made his Queene ſhew her ſelfe often with a crowne of gold on her head, and royally attired and attended, and ſhe became that pompe very well, for ſhe was of an exquiſite beauty; Himſelfe altered one point of his ordinary pompe, for whereas the Bible was carried before him at his right hand, and a naked ſword on the left, he tranſferred the ſword to the right hand, of which he gave this reaſon, that the Goſpell had been preſented to the impenitent world, but now the ſword came in the place, to deſtroy thoſe that had rejected the Goſpell. With ſuch toyes and riddles he fed the eyes and the eares of the hungry people, much like the *Lydians*, that invented games to paſſe away their hunger in a yeare of famine.

Wel, Eaſter came, and no help came, this put our Prophet King to his plunges; he ſhut himſelfe up, faining to be ſicke, for ſixe dayes, then he came forth and ſaid to the people, that in his ſickneſſe God had ſet him upon a blind Aſſe, and laid upon him the ſinnes of the whole multitude, whereby they were all made cleane and free from their ſins, and that this was the deliverance which God had promiſed them at Eaſter. Sure if ever there was a falſe Chriſt, this was one.

Much

Much did he rely upon the negotiation of *Iohn Geles* whom he dayly expected, beleeving as it was true, that he had a great party in *Holland* and *Frize*: And indeed *Geles* did all that the wit of man could do to raise troopes for his King in those Countries, which he put all in combustion, as we shall heare in the following Chapter. But he was killed in a tumult which he had raised in *Amsterdam*, and some troopes of his confederates that were comming to relieve *Munster*, were defeated in *Frize* at *Bolswerd*.

This poore Lord of misrule, hearing those ill newes cast off all hope, and could no more put a good face to his desperate case; For Famine was fierce in the Town, bread was spent long ago, horses, dogs and cats were consumed, the grasse and the very roots were pickt out of the ground: and the people solicited by letters from the campe, but more by their own extremity, were taking counsell to take the King, and deliver him to the enemy, to buy their peace. In that extremity the King commands the gates to be set open, and that as many as would should go forth: So in one day a thousand of all ages and sexes went out of the Town, and yielded to the mercy of the Prince, who mildly received them, fed them, and let them go.

A few dayes after, famine increasing in the Town, the King proclaimed that as many as wanted faith in Gods help, should voyd the Town, saying withall, that those that should forsake the faith, should be forsaken of God. Many were so blindly zealous, that this speech stayd them, and they chose rather to perish in the Town, than seem to forsake the faith; yet many weary to feed upon starved mice, and broyled shoes, and leane Prophesies, hearkened to good counsell, and tooke the safety that was offered them. *Antonius Corvinus* a Lutheran Divine writes, that he hath seen books whose covering was eaten in the famine, and that when the town was taken, children halfe eaten were found in corners.

Yet

Yet in that generall famine, the King had six months provision left, and kept a good table to the very last.

They had not held out so long, but that the Princes met at *Coblents*, could not agree about the contribution, and so the siege went but slowly one; But the Emperour made them meet again at *Wormes* in *Aprill*, where fifty thousand crowns a month were granted to the Bishop for five monthes, and it was ordered that after the taking of the Town, the innocent people should be spared, and that all the good Citizens that were come out, or kept in by force, should have restitution of all their goods. By order of the Princes, the Army was delivered to *Obersteyn*, who because the pay was slow, which made the Souldiers discontent and mutinous, could do no great exployt.

Yet finally the town was taken in *June*, 1535, having endured a siege of eighteen months. It was neither yeelded nor forced, but surprized, by the meanes of two that fled out of the towne, and guided *Obersteyns* souldiers in the night, through the town ditch, where the water was fordable: they scaled the wales, killed the watches, and put the next Court of guard to the sword. The noyse of it awaked the townsmen, who by reason of their light supper, had but a light sleepe. They had time to make a strong barrecadoe in the market place, and fought valiantly a long time, putting the Bishops Souldiers to the worse till they broke open one of the towne gates, and let in more men. The towns-men seeing themselves oppresst with number, craved quarter, and had it; But the King resisted to the last, in S. *Lamberts* Church-yard and was with much ado taken, with *Knipperdolling*; *Rotman* would not yeeld, and was slaine in the conflict.

The Bishop entred into the citty the next day with fifteen hundred horse, and brought out the spoile of the town from the souldiers; The Citizens that had yeelded were spared, but the fierce *Anabaptists* that could never be tamed, and

lay

lay hid in severall holes, were sought out and killed; some souldiers having made bold with the handsomest women, were poysoned with them, and found dead in their beds. This caused the death of many women, revenge being as hot as lust was before: the fairy Queene either escaped or was killed, for it was not known what became of her.

The King, and no King, was sent prisoner to a Castle foure miles from *Munster*. He went thither somewhat faster than he would, being tyed to the taile of a galloping horse, whereby his Majesty was no little discomposed; *Knipperdulling*, and *Krechting* another Prophet, were sent prisoners to *Horstmar*, soone after, all three were brought to *Telget*, where the Bishop asked *Iohn* of *Leyden*, by what authority he had made himselfe King over his City and his people: *Iohn* of *Leyden* asked him again, who had given him any right or authority over that people, the Bishop answered that he came to it by election of the Chapter and the people, and I (said *Iohn* of *Leyden*) came in by the will and calling of God.

Two Lutheran Divines *Corvinus*, and *Kymens* were sent to confer with *Iohn* of *Leyden*, and *Knipperdulling*: they made the first to abjure many of his errours, and found him tractable enough, and one that heard reason: But *Knipperdulling* like a mad beast, would neither heare nor answer reason, but stood only upon revelations, and a particular spirit: Of him *Iohn of Leyden* complained much, saying that he played the Pope and would affirm, that he had the same power in things spirituall, as the King had in things temporall, and that it was fit there should be one King for the temporall, & another for the spirituall. They were condemned & executed as traytors and rebels, being tyed to a stake and pulled in diverse parts of their bodyes with hot pincers for an houre and more, and then stricken in the heart with a dagger. *Kreghting* suffered the like death. *Iohn* of *Leyden* shewed a great constancy, if persisting in evil may be called so, for being at the stake, & hearing

his sentence read, he maintained that he had indeed offended the Magistrate, but that he had not offended God. After their death they were put in iron cages and hanged to a high steeple of Saint *Lambart*; *John* of *Leyden* hanging higher than the two others.

So died that imaginary King of justice by the hand of justice, in the first yeare of his raigne, being but six and twenty yeeres of age, and there was an end of his Kingdome and his Propheſies: He was of a faire proportion, of an awfull and yet lovely preſence, of a preſent wit and ſtrong judgement, eloquent, artificiall, cloſe, politique; All the Prophets and *Anabaptiſts* of *Munſter* were fooles but he, and he made uſe of their folly to ſerve his own ambition, which aſpired to no leſſe than the dominion of the world. He was indeed a dangerous inſtrument of Satan, likely to have made a fearfull revolution, and planted a new Monarchy in the weſt of the world; for all the commons in a manner of *Germany*, *Low-countries*, *Moravia*, *Switzerland*, and other Regions, in all likelyhood would had joyned with him, if he could once have come out of *Munſter*, as it may appeare by the Chapters following.

Chap. V.

The tumults of the Anabaptiſts *in Low* Germany.

THe *Anabaptiſts* that made themſelves maſters of *Munſter* were deboyſhed tradeſmen of *Holland* and *Frize*, and there during the troubles of *Munſter*, the ſame ſpirit was working with efficacy in the children of Rebellion: They had like projects, but worſe ſucceſſe.

In *February* 1534. ſome of them raiſing a ſedition at the

Haghe

Haghe were apprehended and put to death. In *March*, letters An. 1534
came from the Emperour *Charles* the fifth, who was Lord of the *Low-Countries*, offering a free pardon to all of that sect, that would within a fortnight, repent and confesse their errour, commanding withall that all persons persisting in that sect should be severely punisht according to the Lawes. Yet the same month a great multitude of *Anabaptists* with their wives and children, leaving all their estates, but what they could carry in money, offered to go over to *Overissell* with twelve ships, and being asked whether they went, they said they went to seeke such land as God would give them; But they were stayed, the Secretary of the *Haghe* being sent in time to *Amsterdam* by the Emperour, to dispatch a convenient number of ships to fight with them, unlesse they disbanded and returned home, it is like they were going to *Munster*, the Sion of the *Anabaptists*.

This restraint made them more fierce, like a streame that swels when it is stopt: for the next day at noone five *Anabaptists* came naked through the streetes with swords in their hands, crying *In the name of the Lord, The blessing of God lyeth upon on part of the City, and his curse on the other*. They were soone followed with others in armes, and the Magistrate raised in all haste some companies of Archers to oppose them; The Authors of the sedition were taken, and all was quiet for that time.

The same day, such another sedition was raised at *Harlem* in which sixe *Anabaptists* were slaine, and two at the *Haghe* were executed for the like cause; Shortly after, sixe of the most seditious were burnt at *Harlem*, and two women drowned.

In *May* following, letters from *Frize* were read in the Counsell of *Amsterdam*, giving warning of a plot of the *Anabaptists*, both of *Frize* and other parts, to meet in *Amsterdam* upon a certaine day, and make themselves masters of the

Town. Presently the Magistrates raised the trained bands of the City, and made them stand in armes about the Town-house, while they sate in Counsell; Then a Proclamation was sent forth that none in the City upon paine of death should harbour any stranger *Anabaptist*, and that all the *Anabaptists* that were in the City should voyd it before five of the clocke in the afternoone; That whosoever should stay after that time, should be put to death, without any remission. Towards night the Magistrates sent to search all the houses, and tooke twenty of them; Foure dayes after the Count of *Hochstrat*, Governour of *Holland*, came into the City with great part of the Counsell of Holland; and then eleven of the *Anabaptists* were beheaded, and foure burnt alive; Thirty six of that sect having abjured it were condemned to walke in procession barehead and barefoot with white sheetes about them, and burning torches in their hands; Before the month was ended, more were found, and more executed, Nine beheaded, and foure burnt, nothing but fire and sword could represse the seditious fury of that fanaticall sect.

About this time two Prophets of *Munster*, *Iames* of *Kemp*, & *Iohn Mathias* of *Middleborough*, were sent by *Iohn* of *Leyden* into *Holland*, to raise there a party for him; *Iames* of *Kemp* he had made Governour of *Amsterdam* where he had as much right to command, as in *Munster*. Their comming to *Amsterdam* raised new tumults, which caused the Earle of *Hochstrat*, to returne in *September*, to confirme the people in the Emperours obedience: In his way he visited *Leyden*, *Harlem*, and *Delfe*, and having called the Burgesses of the Cities, he concluded the destruction of all the *Anabaptists*. Being come to *Amsterdam*, he sent for the Magistrates, chid them grievously for being too remisse in executions, and presently committed two noted *Anabaptists*; Vpon which a rumour being spread in the City, that the night after, two hundred should be taken and sent bound to the *Hague*, there to bee

exe-

executd, a great multitude aroſe towards night, and ſtood in armes about the town houſe; The Magiſtrates raiſed the trained bands, and came reſolved to fall upon them, but bloudſhed was prevented by the wiſe and moderate counſell of two of the beſt, who undertooke to ſend them home with good words, and ſo they did; for having asked them why they aſſembled themſelves in the night in ſuch a tumultuous manner, the *Anabaptists* anſwered that they would not be taken ſleeping in their beds; the Magiſtrates promiſed upon their faith and credit, that they ſhould receive no harme, and ſo they were quieted and disbanded: But this uproare did ſo fright the Count of *Hochſtrate*, that he withdrew himſelfe preſently.

All theſe were but preludes to a greater miſchiefe wrought chiefly by that pernitious inſtrument *Iames* of *Kemp*, who lay hid in *Amſterdam* ſix months, appearing only in the night, to keepe conventicles ſeducing the people: Herein he was ſtrongly ſeconded by *Iohn Geles*, ſent by *Iohn* of *Leyden*, to be a leader of the wandring brethren to *Munſter*, as we ſaid before, and that expectation made *Munſter* hold ſo long.

But *Iohn Geles* being come to *Frize* and *Holland*, found no wandring Iſrael in the deſart, as it was reported in *Munſter*, wherefore he went to the Cities, where he made a great party, and cauſed ſeverall inſurrections, and yet was not ſeene in any for a long time.

In *Ianuary* 1535. it was diſcovered that the *Anabaptists* had a plot to ſet *Leyden* on fire by night, and although timely notice was given, fire was ſet in ſeverall places of the town, the houſes were ſearched, and the heads of the conſpiracy were taken together in one houſe, fifteene men and five women, the men were beheaded, the women drowned. An. 1535.

The next month the *Anabaptists* plaid a mad pranke in *Amſterdam*, In a womans houſe, whoſe husband was gone to the Weſt Indies; ſeven men and five women of that ſect had

a meeting. One of them *Theodoret* a Taylor, who bore himselfe for a Prophet, fell flat to the ground, and prayed with such vehemency, that he scared all the assistants out of their wits: Then rising, as it were out of an extacy, I have seen (said he) God in his Majesty, and have spoken with him, I was rapt up to heaven, then I descended into hell, and there searched every corner; the great day of the last judgement is coming: & thou (speaking to one of the company) art cursed for ever, thou art not good enough for hell, thou shalt be cast into the bottomlesse pit. Then the poore condemned man, fel on his knees, craving pardon, and the Prophet pardoned him, & announced him a ful remission of all his sins. Again in the night they met in the same place, the women having left their husbands a bed. After foure hours spent in praying & teaching, the Prophet b:armed, *Capa pea* (for in these Canonicall robes he preached) first, put off his head-peece, then his corslet, then his sword, then his garments and his very shirt, and throweth all into the fire: then he commanded the company in authority of a Prophet to do the like, and so they did, women and all, leaving not so much as a haire-lace to tye up their scattered haire, no covering to the body, no shelter to shame; for so was the Prophets pleasure, that they should cast away all that came out of the earth, & burnt it as a sacrifice of sweet savor unto God: yet you may think that the burning of so many clothes, yeelded no very sweet savor; & it was such that it awaked the Mistris of the house; that knew nothing of this meeting, and made her rise to seeke where the burning was, for that smell made her afraid that the fire was in her shop; which was of wollen drapery: Being come to the place she saw eleven naked bodies, and the Prophet commanded her to put off her cloaths, and set them in the fire which she did: then the Prophet commanded them all to follow him and do as he would do, and so rushed into the street, starke naked, and all his disciples after him, running and crying horribly

ribly through the town; Woe, woe, woe, the divine vengeance, the divine vengeance: Whereby they put the whole town in an uproare, the people thinking that the town was surprized by some enemy; they were all taken but one woman that slipt out of the way, and were brought to the Magistrate, and as they stood naked in a full court, they could never be perswaded neither by commands, nor threatnings, to put on garments, which were offered them, saying, that they must have no covering, for they were the naked truth. They were kept a while in prison till the great conspiracy, two months after, and then were executed: the Mistris of the house where the conventicle was kept, was hanged before her own doores.

In *March*, a thousand men of that sect, came out of *Hainault* to *Holland*, and were repulsed in time before they gathered more strength.

The same month, three hundred *Anabaptists* fell upon the Monastery of *Bolswerd* in *Frize*, rifled it, pulled down the Church; and trampled the Eucharist under their feet. *George Shenk* a great man of *Frize*, hearing of it, gathered presently a considerable number of his tenants and neighbours, and met the Rebels, offering impunity to all but ten. They answered that they would all live and dye together, and so they did; for they endured a siege in the ruines of the Monastery, where they were all killed, or taken, and executed after, saving only threescore and two men that fled.

The frequent seditions in all parts of *Holland* were hardly repress with frequent excutions, for *John Geles* was raising seditions from city to city, to frame a party for his King. A cunning plotting projector he was, and by his leading the Monastery of *Bolswerd* was taken: his intent was to go with his troop to *Munster*, and gather more strength as he went: But being defeated by *George Shenk*, he fled to *Amsterdam*, changed his name, and went for a Merchant; For by the severall confessions of many that were executed for sedition, the name of *Geles*

was

was known, & grown famous for the prime author of all the factions of *Holland* and *Frize*.

In that City he found many fit subjects for his deluſions, to whom he told wonders of the new Kingdome of righteouſneſſe at *Munſter*, their liberty of life, their pilladging of Churches, and enriching themſelves with the ſubſtance of the ungodly, and of the great deſignes of their King, and the prophecies of the propagation of his Kingdom in the world.

By ſuch diſcourſes he filled the minds of the people with a frantique zeale, and made them long to be fingering of the Chalices and Plates of Churches, & rob the Silver and Gold of the Egyptians. There was then one *Henry Goetbelit* in the town, a proper ſtrong man, that had much followed the wars, and had got a great reputation of valour: this man was won by by the *Anabaptiſts*, and made by *Geles* his aſſociate and partner of all his counſels.

And becauſe *Geles* was in great feare to be known by his right name (for the only changing of his name by the laws of the Country was puniſhable by death) he was perſwaded by his friends to go to the Court of *Brabant*, & there confeſſe his fault, and buy his pardon (which he might well, for he had brought a great ſumme of money out of *Munſter*) and then returne and converſe freely and openly, with his owne name, and have more liberty and opportunity to bring his deſignes to action.

He went then to the Court, where Queene *Mary* of *Portugall*, ſiſter to *Charles* the fifth, was Governeſſe of the ſeventeen Provinces, and ſped ſo well, that not only he obtained his pardon, but got a great truſt in the Court, promiſing to deliver the City of *Munſter* to the Emperour. To that effect he got a commiſſion under the great Seale, with a good ſum of money, to leavy ſouldiers for that ſervice.

Having thus cozened the Court, he returned to *Amſterdam*, to cozen the Magiſtrates, who ſeeing his commiſſion, and

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the greatnesse of the designe, would emulate the trust repo-sed upon him by their Superiors, and shewed him much fa-vour, he tooke his lodging in the Spanish ordinary, consorted with men of that nation, and Religion, gave faire words to all, which made the Magistrates secure, and himselfe un-sufferable.

He made such use of that liberty, that in a short time he had contrived a most politique enterprise, to make himselfe Master of the City. In a night meeting, he announced to his brother-hood the Oracle of *Henry Hilversum*, that God had given to the King of *Sion*, *Amsterdam*, *Wesell*, and *Daventer*, for the first fruits of his raigne over the world, perswading them that to invade *Amsterdam* was an easie matter, having to do with a few idle bellies, and that they had a faire op-portunity at hand, to kill them all together in the towne-house, the twelfth of the instant *May*, a day kept festivall by ancient custome, by the society of the Crosse, who used to make a great feast at night in the town-house, and invite all the Magistrates, and men of meanes of the City, and there to spend most part of the night in drinking, and looking upon fire workes: That day then was designed for the enterprise, and their enemies noted and designed for the slaughter, and the richest houses already shared among them; they appoin-ted for the signall of their rising, the ringing of the bell in the town-house; Before they parted, *Iohn Geles* gave to every one a Ducat for a bond of society and secrecy. He and *Henry Goetbelit* were to be the leaders.

The appointed night being come, some *Anabaptists* were up before the signall, which the rest looking for, stayed so long, that the enterprise was disappointed; for the same day the bell rope was taken out of the way by a drunken fellow, yet by an admirable providence of God, watching for the safety of the City, and so there was no ringing, and no great meeting: The Magistrates and the society of the Crosse,

hearing that the *Anabaptists* were up in armes, left their sport and went home. Yet the Magistrates were so long consulting, that they were almost surprised by their enemies who rushed with colours flying, and drums beating, into the town house, and killed some of the Sergeants and waiters, & made the masters that went before, to go out of their Aldermans pace to save their lives. Then comming to the great place where the bonefires were burning, they overthrew them, that they might give more terrour; and shoote undiscerned upon the multitude, they killed many in the darke with bullets, which they had poisoned for feare of failing, and the Burgmaster *Peter Colin* being come to encounter them with a troop of Citizens, was by them slaine, and his men put to flight. Then one *Goswin*, a man of great authority in the city and one that had valour and skill in war, commanded that the streetes should be stopt with great sacks of Hops, heaped up to be instead of gabions, against the shot of the *Anabaptists*. And because he trusted not in the feare full and unexperienced Citizens, he called volunteeres, to whom he promist a months pay for that dayes service; By that meanes he got many that had seene warre before, and made a gallant company.

The night being darke, he could attemp nothing till day, only he tooke an order that all the waies to the market place (where the *Anabaptists* stood in armes) should be stopt, and that the rest of the people should keepe at home without noise: this order frighted the *Anabaptists*, seeing no hope to be assisted by their brethren, who for want of the signal of the bell were not come, & now it was too late for them to come, the wayes being stopt, and having lost the first opportunity of the fright of the people, who now were come to themselves, and stood upon their defence. Then *Gumbelin* said to *Geles*, this was my feare, that beginning this enterprise with so few we should come short of it (for they were not above

forty) now all that we have to do is to dye like men. Nay (sayd *Geles*) if you will beleeve a Prophet, we shall be masters of the City before to morrow ten of the clock: then they sung Psalmes all night, at the breake of day, the people perceiving them, began to shoote at them, which made them retire into the town-house, and there keepe strong; the people brought ordinance before it, and were ready to have battered it down, but *Gesvin* would try first to assault the doore, which was done with effect, although the *Anabaptists* fought it out stoutly, and but twelve of them were taken, the rest was killd and *Goetbelis* one of them. *John Geles* that would by any means cozen the hangman of his fees, gate upon a little steeple where the town bell hung, and gave a faire marke to the souldiers below who shot him thorough, whereof he fell down dead into the place. The prisoners were executed, and some more of the town, and some living without the gates, who hearing shooting of guns, were come to pillage the City, supposing that it was taken. Two women were hanged, and two drowned for poysoning the bullets; many more since were executed, and amongst others, some of those that danced that Antique Masque of naked men and women, and a woman and her sonne, for receiving *Iames* of *Kemp*, contrary to the order of the Magistrate. For it had been proclaimed in the town, that whosoever should harbour him, and not discover him before night, should be hanged at his door, but he that should discover him should have a great reward, He was found hid in a heape of turves, and executed with ignominy, having a two horned miter on his head, because he played the Bishop. His tongue was cut off, wherewith he had preached sedition, and his hand wherewith he baptized without authority.

A little before the great plot, foureteene had conspired, when a solemne procession should go over the bridge, to throw the Eucharist and them that carried it, down the bridg

into the water, the plot was detected and the Authours executed.

John Geles had warned three hundred men of *Iselswin*, to meet him at *Amsterdam*, three or foure dayes after the intended enterprize, intending with that garrison to keepe the town; They came neare it, but hearing how matters went with their brethren, they dispersed themselves presently, and returned home by severall wayes: He had appointed more brethren from severall places, to come at a certaine day; but they hearing the ill successe of their tribe, tooke their way into *England*, in two ships, and here it seemeth they have stayed ever since.

And now the heart of that faction was broken in all the *Low Countries*, for they left not searching and executing, in every city till all that generation was extinct or brought so low that they left plotting. Ten yeares after, some reliques of that faction would offer to stir at *Leyden*, the authors being taken and examined, confest that the *Anabaptists* had chosen a King who was not crowned yet, and was to succeed *John* of *Leyden*, and another to be his high Treasurer, and that both were at *Vtrecht*. Both were apprehended, and kept some moneths in prison. Among other exploits of that elected King, he had brought his wife into a wood, and there killed her, that without interruption he might lye with her daughter, and had lately cut a young wenches throat least she should detect him; good store of Plate was found in his house, most of it Church Plate: It seemes that party began to make a stocke for a new Kingdome, the King and his Treasurer were burnt. That was the last sparke of that faction till our times.

CHAP.

Chap. VI.

Of the Anabaptists *of* Suitzerland, *and other places.*

THe South of *Germany*, was not free from that sect, at *Zurick* they began to picke a quarrell with Ministers, who did their best to reduce them with reason and mildnesse, for eight or nine weekes together, they conferred with them every tuesday, and being overcome in dispute, they fled to revelations, their ordinary sanctuary, falling into trance before the company, and when they waked out of it, saying that they had a revelation that the doctrine of *Zuinglius* was damnable, and *Anabaptisme* holy, and that the day of judgement should be within two yeares. Dayly they prophecyed in the market place, girded about with a rope, or a weeth, calling the chiefe Minister of the place (*Iohn Gastio*) the ancient dragon, and his Colleagues the heads of the Dragon; boasting of their holinesse (which consisted much in the teaching the rich men community of goods) and crying in the streetes Woe, woe, woe, to the City of *Zurick*; some went so far, as to give forty dayes time to *Zurick*, as *Ionas* did to *Ninevie*, after which it must be destroyed. After a long pacience of the Magistrate, they were put in prison, where they were again convented in conference by the Ministers, and many times conducted by their keepers to a publike meeting wher all the people might heare the conference. Finding themselves short of reason and confuted by Scripture, they would answer that what they could not prove by reason and Scripture, they would prove by their bloud. Thus ten conferences were held, and two of them in the Church, every conference lasting three dayes, where they got so much discredit

to their cause, that the number of their sectaries decreased much, and the Senate proclaimed, that if any should rebaptize such as were baptized already, he should be drowned. And so, many were baptized the third time, and *Zurick* was in peace.

The Genius of that sect was every where alike, for they went from city to city where they heard that reformation was received, (not to any Popish town) and whersoever they came, they presently troubled the State, and filled all with clamour and sedition. By them was the town of *Waldut* miserably ransacked, and all the Inhabitants driven away out of their possessions: The like they were like to have done at *Wormes*, at *Ausburg*, at *Bazell*, at *Shafuse*; at *Berne*, at *Lucerna*, at *Passaw*, I will not weary the reader with all these passages, their actions at *Munster* and *Amsterdam*, are sufficient to give a Character of that sect, and I aime at no more, *Crimine ab uno disce omnes*; I will adde but a few more of their maximes, and some passages of their behaviour; observing no order of time, for my authours observe none.

It was their constant doctrine every where, that women must be common. Three reasons they had well worthy to be registred to posterity, to perswade honest women to prostitute their bodyes, if they would be saved. The first was, that Christians must renounce those things which they love best; and therefore women must renounce their beloved honesty. The second, that for Christs sake we must undergo any kind of infamy: The third reason was, that the Puclicans and harlots shall go before the Pharisees in the Kingdome of heaven. Lying with other women than their wives, they called spirituall marriages, and under that title they would lye with neeces and sisters. With that doctrine they had seduced two sisters, maidens at Saint *Gall* by *Zurick*; As soone as they were rebaptized they being a bed, two spirituall husbands came to them and lay with them, but with such fervent spirit

Ioh. Gastio Lib. 1. contra Catabaptistas p. 10.

Iob. Gastio lib. 1. p. 21.

that

that they brake the bottome of the bed-stead out; the noise wherof awaked the people of the house, who comming up in haste found two spirituall weddings in one broken bed.

They had a maine reason for community of women, that as Christians are all one spirit, they must also be all one body, which it seemeth they had learned of the *Carpocratians*, * who held the same doctrine, as their doctrine of rebaptizing seemeth to be an offering of the old *Hemero baptistæ*, [a] that were baptized every day, or the [b] *Marcionites*, that received three baptismes. My Author saith, that these two poore maidens of St. *Gall*, before they were *Anabaptists*, had been much sollicited, and could never be wonne, till they were perswaded to be whores for conscience sake.

* *Epi lib. 1. Tom. 2.*

a *Idem l. 1. tom. p. c. 17.*

b *Idem l. 1. Tom. 3.*

In the same town, one of that sect, being in his Prophetical mood, called his father, mother, brother, and sisters, commanded his brother to kneel down, & then he cut off his head with one blow, which done, the will of God is done, said he, and ran out of doores to the Burgmaster, to whom he said, I announce unto thee the day of the Lord, meaning the day of Ascension at hand, in the yeare 1541. A day, which two yeares before they had foretold should be the day of judgement; But the Burgmaster announced him his day of judgement, and he was executed as he deserved.

It were an endlesse taske to rehearse their severall errours, which because all among them were preachers, could not but multiply *in infinitum*: They held among other things that rebaptized men cannot sinne, because they are Gods children, that all Ministers that hold Church livings, are from the Devill: That the Apostles had nothing proper, but went from house to house, some would say that they had no need of the Lords Prayer, because they prayed by the Spirit; many denyed the God-head of Christ, and for that two were executed at *Neufchastel*. In *Moravia* especially that opinion was received, which country because of the looseness of

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the government, swarmed with *Anabaptists*, and was cryed up by the Sectaries of *Switzerland*, and upper *Germany*, for a land of promise, and thither many of them removed their household, when they found themselves represt.

One of them committed a notable imposture, In the night time he put a great number of fishes in a foule pudle where the people used to wash horses, and in the morning he prophesied, thus saith the Lord, cast nets in this pudle and you shall get good fish, a thing incredible, for never any fish was seen there. But as his word, his disciples cast the net, and enclosed multitude of fishes, so that the net brake. Thus the profane raskall would imitate the miracle of Christ, and God in his anger gave efficacy of errour to that false miracle which deceived many.

By *Basel* there was an uproare of some vilages who would have three things, abolish all tythes, pull downe all Magistrates, and kill all the ungodly, but they were stopt in time and disbanded and fined. The ground of these attempts of the *Anabaptists* in so many places, was a dreame they had of a temporall Kingdome of Christ, with whom all the Godly should raigne in earth without any infirmity of body or soule, all Gods enemies being destroyed first, for all *Anabaptists* were and are still *Chiliasts*, expounding litterally that Kingdome of a thousand yeares, of *Revel.* 20. 6. to be a temporall Kingdom. That fancy put many of them out of their wits, all the histories that speake of them, relate many examples of their looking seriously for the comming of the Lord upon such a night, being warned by revelation, which made them fast and pray that night, and put all their businesses out of order.

Much conference they had with the Angell *Gabriel*, and one of their women, a very poore one, saw him to her thinking, in a vision, bidding her to lay the cloath and invite her neighbours, and that God would send her Manna and quailes

from

from heaven, and that her table should flow with milke and honey, In that confidence she laid the cloath and invited her neighbours, who were so silly as to come; Then the good woman fell to prayers, to fetch Manna and quailes from heaven, but none came, & the nighbours put up their knives, and went home having had long graces, but no meate. Another woman had a revelation that God would keepe her alive without meate, and she fasted to death.

Vnder pretence of childish innocency, they played many mad prankes, one having kept his excrements in store many dayes, powred it into the street, and turned himselfe naked into it, saying, for his reason, that unlesse we be made like little children, we cannot enter into the Kingdome of heaven. Others for the same reason, would ride naked upon sticks and hobby horses, like children in great companies, and women would run naked with them, and then in pure innocency they lay together, and so in the end it proved childrens play indeed.

Mad feats might have been suffered or repress with mild courses, but their general design to pul down all Magistrates, and kil all the ungodly, that is, all that were none of their sect, provoked the just severity of the Princes & commonwealths against them; and for 20. yeares, many thousands of them were killed, burned, and drowned, till their reliques were so contemptible, that they were let alone for compassion.

Chap. VII.

Conclusion.

AND now let the sufferings of so many Churches & states by that pernitious sect, be a warning to our Church and State to beware of all doctrines, and proceedings that have any affinity with theirs. For I am afraid that *Anabaptisme* is

very rife in *England*, though not perhaps in one entire body, but ſcattered in peeces like the limbs of *Aſcyrtus*; here one tenet of *Anabaptiſme*, and there another; yet not ſo ſcattered but they meet in one head, which is the hatred of all rule: Marke the end of the preſent diſtempers; without Prophetical ſpirit, this I will make bold to foretell, what rule ſoever our wiſe and pious Parliament ſhall fit, it will not ſet bounds to the unquiet ſpirit of a lawleſſe generation, which is now crying, let Chriſt rule, becauſe they would have no rule: It is not ſo much the miſrule of Epiſcopacy, that they ſtrike at, they have a quarrell at all rules. Rule is that they feare, ſet any rule in the Church, they will call it perſecution: And they do not mince it, they ſay openly that therefore they diſlike ſome things commanded, becauſe they are impoſed. Is not that the very leaven of the Prophets of *Munſter*, and *Amſterdam*?

To paſſe from that head of *Anabaptiſme* to the limbs, millenaries are moſt frequent with us; men that looke for a temporall Kingdome of Chriſt, that muſt begin preſently, and laſt a thouſand yeares. Of that opinion are moſt of our Apocalypticall men, that ſtudy more the future events, than their preſent duty, & are more ruled by Propheſies than precepts.

This fancy is moſt dangerous for all ſtates, for to promote that Kingdom of Chriſt, they teach that all the ungodly muſt be killed, that the wicked have no propriety in their eſtates, and that now the promiſe muſt be fulfilled, that the meeke ſhall inherit the earth. This doctrine filleth the ſimple people with a furious and unnaturall zeale, which breathes nothing but fire and ſword, and maketh them looke upon their country men, with ſuch an eye as the *Anabaptiſts* caſt upon *Munſter*, when they came firſt into it, a malignant and covetous eye, already deſigning their prey, and marking the rich to ruine & deſtruction. God ſave us from a reformation wrought by a multitude miſled with a frantick zeale, and giddy revelations.

lations, for then, God helpe them that have plate, or coyne in their houses, they shall be sure to be taken for limbs of the Antichrist, and all the good towns of the Kingdome, shall be reformed like *Munster* and *Walzut*.

Another maine peece of *Anabaptisme*, is that over great confidence that many have, that they are ruled by the spirit, which maketh them despise all ordinary calling to the Ministery, all written prayers, all helpes of study, all reason and good counsell; Why? all these bind the Spirit, who bloweth where he listeth, and some begin to make conscience to heare and sing the Psalmes, because they are written prayers, which bind the spirit, chusing rather to condemn the Word of God than their own inventions; as he that wou'd not beleeve the sunne because it agreed not with his watch. I expect that some will say with *John* of *Leyden*, that if the Word of God were lost they might soone supply it with another.

Likewise this ordinary presumptuous saying of theirs, be in Christ, and sin if thou canst, meaning that regenerate men cannot sin, is the very doctrine of the *Anabaptists*; and so these maximes, that to take the Communion where there is a profane person, is to partake with his profaneness. That the Lords Prayer was never taught to be said, that the Gospell was never purely taught, since the Apostles, till the last Reformation; That whosoever hath a gift may teach without any calling; that distinction betweene Clergy and Laity is only for the Kingdome of the Antichrist That a liberty of Prophecying must be allowed, that distinction of parishes is Antichristian; that Ministers of Gods Word should rule both the spirituall and the temporall; that all humane Lawes must be abolished, and all policies of States must be taken out of the Word of God, and all differents betweene parties judged out of the word of God only. All these are Sions of that stock of *Anabaptisme*, that was transplanted out of *Holland* in the yeare 1535, when two ships laden with *Anabaptists*, fled into

England

England after they had miſt the enterpriſe of *Amſterdam*, To theſe doctrines you may joyne their practiſe. The ſeditious Pamphlets, the tumultuous riſing of rude multitudes threatning bloud and deſtruction; the preaching of the cobblers, feltmakers, taylors, grocmes, and women, the chuſing of any place for Gods ſervice but the Church; the night meetings of naked men and women; the licentiouſneſſe of ſpirituall marriages without any legall forme; Theſe things if they be not looked into, will bring us in time to community of wives, community of goods, and deſtruction of all.

The Lord regard our confuſions in pity, not in anger, and ſo direct our gracious King, and his religious Parliament, with the good ſpirit of his feare, that what they have well begun, they may well finiſh; going thorough that great worke of Reformation, with Piety, wiſdome, and courage, weeding out of the Church all that hath any reliſh of Popery, either remained of old, or newly brought forth again, to the great and juſt offence of all good Chriſtians, and together ſuppreſſing the growth of *Anabaptiſme*, which is the canker of Religion, and the gangrine of the State, and that ſpeedily, before it eate us up to the heart.

FINIS.

BRITISH MUSEUM

6

Many Remarkeable

PASSAGES

from both Houſes of PARLIAMENT.

From the 12. of *May* till this preſent, Concerning the great affaires of the whole Kingdome.

With many more Paſſages of great Conſequence concerning Sir *Edward Deering* and divers other *Kentiſh-men*, and concerning a Charge to be drawne up againſt them for their ſpeedy Tryall.

WITH

The Examination of Miſtreſſe *Sanders*, living at *Ratcliffe*, Siſter to *Oneale*, before the Houſe of Commons, the 12. of *May*, 1642.

Alſo another Examination by the Honourable Houſe of Commons, Concerning Sir *Nicholas Cole*, and the Inhabitants of *Newcaſtle*. *May* 13. 1642.

Together with an Order of both Houſes of Parliament, Concerning the continuance of the Terme at *Weſtminſter*.

John Browne Cleric Parliament.

Likewiſe his Majeſties Letter to the Gentry of *Yorkeſhire*, *May*, 16. 1642.

London, Printed for *T. Ryder*.. 1642.